

Awareness is key to crime prevention

By MSgt. Harold Jeghers
48th Security Forces Squadron

Domestic and international terrorism is a crime. Awareness is the key to successful crime prevention.

Like any crime, there are some measures we can all use to avoid, detect and minimize the potential for becoming a victim of terrorism. Antiterrorism awareness is an individual responsibility. We all benefit from a coordinated awareness effort.

As a citizen of the United States in an overseas area, certain safety issues need more attention. Especially when serving in the military, you directly or indirectly represent our government. We truly are "ambassadors" both on and off duty. You have opportunities for close contact with diverse cultures in foreign countries. Most Americans only read about or see distant lands on television. Serving your country overseas also invites an increased exposure to potential terrorist acts.

You can never really be too security conscious. Terrorism by its very nature thrives on unpredictable acts applied randomly to a wide spectrum of victims. Truly, some victims are just in the wrong place at the wrong time. No amount of personal awareness can prevent this rendezvous with terror. Fortunately many law enforcement and security agencies work hard to thwart terrorist activity. Terrorist Threat Conditions help identify local and regional risk levels assessed for United States personnel and facilities.

What is Vigilant Defender? The 48th Security Forces Squadron developed Operation Vigilant Defender to promote antiterrorism awareness within our military community. Working together

we can provide the best possible deterrence to crime, including terrorism. Vigilant Defender is a concept helping focus and raise local antiterrorism awareness. Everyone should be a vigilant defender. Your alertness will complement normal and expanded security measures. Know your own surroundings, if something is just not right, be curious. Take an interest in what's going on around the community. Investigate situations prompting your curiosity. Report suspicious activity to the police. We are all partners against crime. Liberty Wing safety and security must be a shared responsibility. Force protection is the name of the game be an alert team player.

Q Can I help Vigilant Defender?

A Yes. Situation awareness is vital. THREATCONs can change rapidly, so know the current threat condition. Increase your vigilance accordingly. Be alert and report any suspicious activity to the Law Enforcement Desk at extension 2333 or (01638) 522333. If an obvious crime or terrorist act is occurring, dial 114, Crime Stop / Antiterrorism Hotline. Dial 999 for off base emergencies. Your call could be the first or only notification that a problem exists within the community. Many people assume a situation was already reported. Be safe and call.

Q Where can I obtain more antiterrorism information?

A Contact your unit security manager, AFOSI detachment, or Security Forces Resource Protection on Ext. 1423. When traveling outside the United States, any U.S. Embassy security office can offer assistance.

Follow simple steps to help prevent car crime

By SrA. Regina Wilson
48th Security Forces Squadron

Below are some useful tips to keep your cars safe.

Doors: always lock all doors every time you leave your car unattended.

Valuables: never leave valuables in plain view. Never leave them in an unattended car. Store them in a secure house.

Cassettes, CDs: if possible, purchase removable parts. Take them from the vehicle when they aren't being used. Don't leave tapes or discs in the car.

All property: security mark all property.

Location: the safest place for cars is in a locked garage. Choose parking spaces wisely. Use legal parking spots in busy areas. Don't park in remote corners. Make sure to use well-lit streets and parking areas.

Lower American profile: Often American military members are targeted for crime because local criminals assume we have better quality or a number of valuables to steal. While on base, display base registration forms, but store cards out of sight while off base. Try to blend vehicles into the local environment as much as possible.

Consider removing U.S. flags, military slogans, college names or other decals and bumper stickers advertising the American connection. Don't draw extra attention to cars. Plain-looking vehicles attract less "window shopping" from criminals.

Vehicle Watch: If your car is not normally used between midnight and 5 a.m., consider joining a local British police Vehicle Watch program. This program allows police to stop your car during these hours to ensure only legal owners or authorized people are using the car.

For more information, call the security forces crime prevention section at Ext. 1424.

Everyone holds key to opportunities

By MSgt. Harold Wescott
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Opportunity, cost – how many times have you lent your ears to those words? What does it mean to you?

You are perhaps conjuring up in your mind some profound equation, where opportunity plus some other variable equals cost. Most of us perceive opportunity as a good thing and cost as something bad. The literal meanings are: opportunity is a favorable time or condition and cost is the amount of time spent or the loss or sacrifice of something. Now, for the sake of this article, let's call the variable personal effort.

We now have opportunity, cost, and personal effort. I had the opportunity to indulge myself with off-duty education at a 75 percent discount. The cost? Absorption of my personal time. As

a result of my personal effort, I have recently received my associates degree. This is one of my success stories. What's yours?

Personal efforts often generate opportunities. When you are involved in off-duty studies, support unit activities, contribute to community projects or hold a position on a base committee, you have just created an opportunity to possibly be recognized by a quarterly, yearly or special award program.

To most of us, the best recognition is moving up a notch on the pay scale. We all know promotions cost time and some sacrifice. It requires determination, dedication and focus. Again the opportunity is yours, so seize the chance to be a wing award winner and have your name read off the next promotion roster. Challenge yourself to seek more education, to be more involved in the unit and community. The bottom line is, you hold the key to great opportunities. The key is your personal effort – but understand its costs.